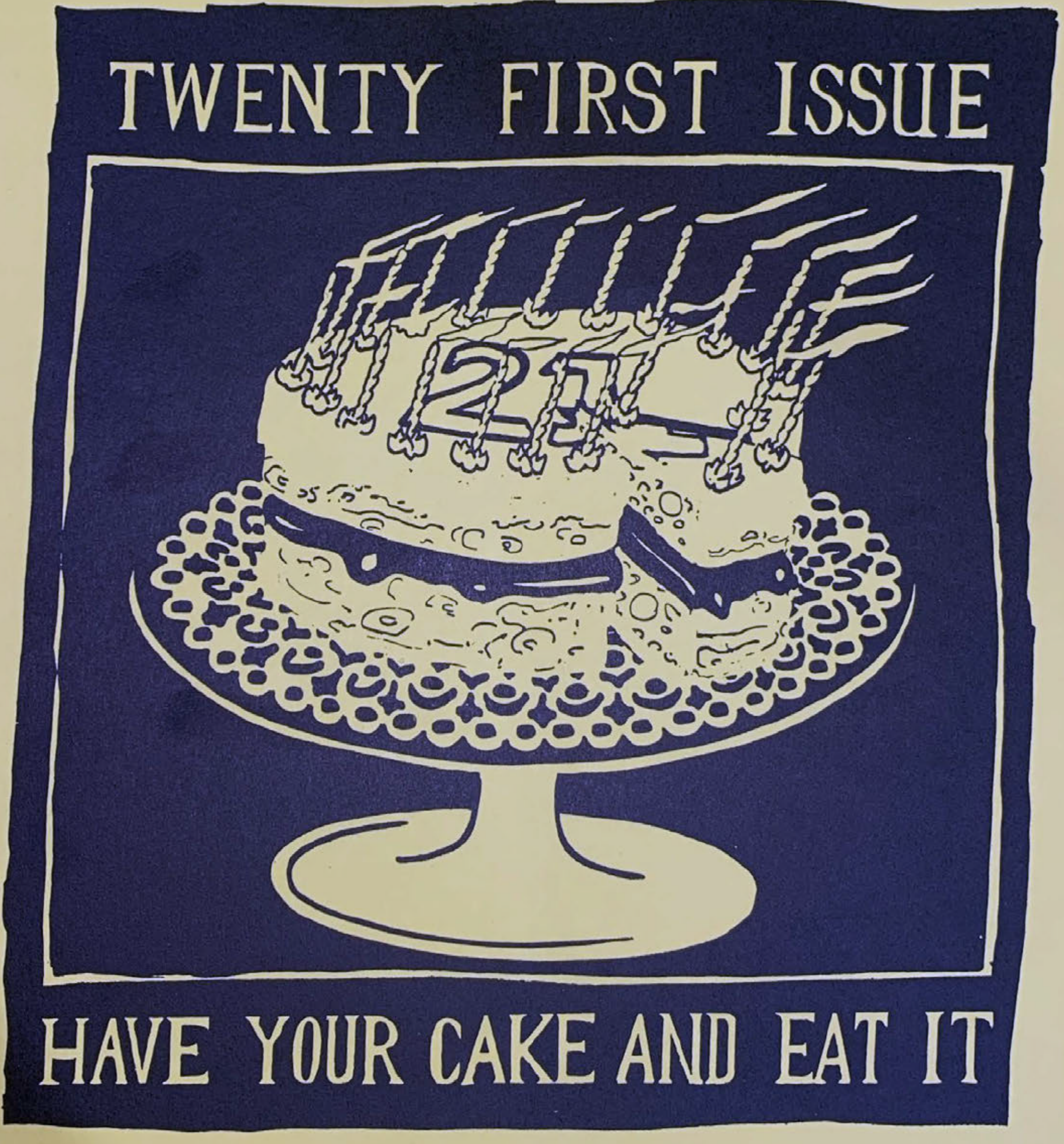
BI-MONTHLY

▽THE MAGAZINE FOR BISEXUALS

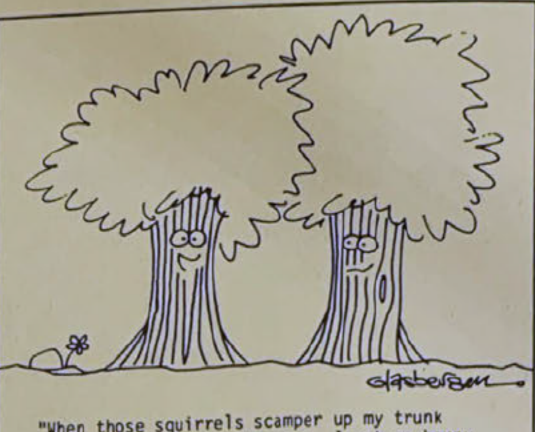
FEBRUARY/MARCH 1989 No. 21 90p


TWENTY FIRST ISSUE
21
HAVE YOUR CAKE AND EAT IT

PERSONAL ADS

PERSONAL ADS cost £1.50 for insertion into two issues, (make cheque/p.o payable to 'LBG'). They can help you get in touch with people all over the country. As you can see below, your name or address are not advertised, only a box number.

TO REPLY TO AN AD:- PUT YOUR LETTER(S) INTO AN UNADDRESSED PLAIN ENVELOPE WITH THE BOX NUMBER MARKED CLEARLY IN THE TOP RIGHT HAND CORNER, (SO WE CAN STICK A STAMP OVER IT). PUT THIS INTO A LARGER ENVELOPE, TOGETHER WITH LOOSE STAMP(S) AND SEND TO:- BI-MONTHLY, BOX NUMBER REPLIES, BM-BI, LONDON WC1N 3XX.



"When those squirrels scamper up my trunk with those velvety soft paws, I get so horny I could scream."

From 'Hot Acts', Gay Sunshine Press, USA 1984

BISEXUAL PHONELINE
031-557 3620

Thursday 7.30-9.30 pm

Information, advice and befriending. Staffed each Thursday by bisexual male and female volunteers.

BISEXUAL PEN-PAL SCHEME

The Pen-Pal scheme offers another way for bisexual people to write to eachother.

Details are circulated without surnames or addresses. Letters are forwarded by the organisers (ie in a box number system) so participants can write and receive letters without disclosing their identity, to others on the Scheme.

For details send an sae to: **Pen-Pal Scheme, Edinburgh Bisexual Group, 58a Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3SA.**

COUPLE, both bisexual, he is in his 50's and she is in her 30's. Would both like to meet similar couple. Can travel or accommodate in either London or North. BOX 20.1

OVERWEIGHT guy age 38, London based but traveller, Would like to meet new friends, couples, any combination for gentle realationship, or careful fun fling. BOX 20.2

BI-Guy looking for similar or stright type of gay male for fun; friendship or whatever happens. I am 38, 6ft, slim athletic type, attractive, and well aware of the modern day crises. Age group 21-44 - London - anywhere. Recently seperated, so please un-bore me. Phone or photos answered first. BOX 20.3

BISEXUAL male, 40, young looking, quite attractive, small, dark, inexperienced, educated. Wishes to meet men and women for culture, nature outings etc. BOX 20.4

LONDON bisexual male, linguist, 31, seeks male or female friends for friendship, or relationship. BOX 20.5

LONDON anywhere bi-man 52, slim, single, fit, easy going, pleasant personality. Would like to hear from any interesting sincere W/E man over 40 with photo. BOX 20.6

BISEXUAL male, white, 26 with fair hair and blue eyes, clean shaven, non-smoker, affectionate, friendly and sociable, varied interests and unemployed at the moment so lots of time. Seeks young bisexual friends, male or female, black or white, for going places with and maybe more. Photo would be nice but not essential. I look forward to hearing from you. BOX 20.7

Friendly Bisexual Male, age 21 seeks girlfriend for friendship onwards. My interests include leisure, recreation, travel and the good things in life. W.Midlands. BOX 20.8

NORTH YORKSHIRE, East Coast Area. Bi-lady, young minded 36, happily married would like to meet another bi-lady or lesbian for a loving relationship. I am a loyal one man/girl woman, vegetarian (non-smoker), like rock music, astrolgy, art etc. BOX 20.9

BI ex Royal Marine. A new comer. I am 37. Would like to meet similar into keep fit, music, sports and chatting. Safe sex. ALA to both sexes. BOX 20.10

CENTRAL SCOTLAND Bi-guy (26) wishes to contact people into fetish fashion for laughs, clubs, easy going fun. BOX 20.11

Gentle young guy in long-term hetero relationship. early 30's, non-smoker, six-foot, blonde, trim, seeks gentle initiation with a pair of young friends (m/f). Genuine first ad. Eager to explore, but a little apprehensive. Try me? I am safe, discreet and expect same. Photo and frank letter bring similar reply. London and SE preferred. BOX 20.12

Bisexual married male, 66, keen to meet another in similar position for daytime companionship. Interests include lit-erature, music, theatre, politics, gardening. Returnable photo appreciated. BOX 20.13

SUSSEX:- Bi lady 26; music student, would like to meet an attractive older woman, to form a loving lasting friendship /relationship. I have an outgoing personality and a sense of fun. I am sensible, genuine and feel a little isolated. So why not drop me a line? ALA. Photo appreciated, confidence respected. BOX 20.14

MANCHESTER/W.YORKS. 39, married bisexual man seeks close rich friendship with similar; must be liberated, brave, intelligent; love kids (I have 2 sons); loathe stereotypes (especially gay ones). Me: Eng. Lit. postgrad, full time father, excellent cook and home-maker, don't suffer fools at all, love the best of everything. Difficult, moody, passionate. Take a risk. BOX 20.15

BI-male, married, slim, young 40's wide ranging interests. Seeks discreet postal friendship with anyone interested in discussing any aspect of male sexuality, sharing fantasies and experiences. I have strong exhibitionist tendencies and would appreciate some outlet. South Humberside/ Anywhere. Box 21.1

BISEXUAL male, married, 40, young looking - Wishes to meet similar for friendship and possible lover in Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster area. Discretion is essential. Box 21.2

LONDON Bi-male (42) slim seeks a bi-lady or male who would be interested to share experiences or talk over interests in S/M. My approach to it is with an attitude of intelligence, respect and care. Box 21.3

Bisexual woman, 24, postgrad student, in complex multiple relationship, seeks others (M,F or couples) for friendship and to discuss the joys and problems of non-monogamy. Would also welcome correspondence with anyone interested in the occult/spiritual side of their sexuality. Age, race, class disability immaterial. ALA. Essex/London. Box 21.4

BOURNEMOUTH: bisexual feminine female, 32, happily married, would like to meet gay or bisexual feminine female for a loving lasting relationship. No participation by husband although he is aware. Interests:- theatre, pop and classical music, literature etc. Also interested in meeting single females or female couples for friendship. Box 21.5

Bi male aged 27, peaceful and easy going nature, into keeping very fit, cinema, books, varied music, countryside and travel. Seeks intelligent, warm bi-lady for friendship initially and hopefully a lasting relationship. Age not important. Photo appreciated but not essential. Yorks, Lancs, Humberside prefered. Box 21.6

Irishman 50, slim, fit, easy going passive chap. Good companion, would like to hear from a v w/e man. Box 21.7

MALE, 48, pleasant 5' 7", fair, shaven, trying to be vegetarian, seeks pleasant couple (m/f) or singles (m/f), age immaterial, interested in rubber,assertion, compliance, to explore health conscious relationship with imagination and understanding. London/ SE England Box 21.8

ANYONE INTERESTED IN A SUPPORT GROUP/NETWORK FOR WOMEN WITH TRANSSEXUAL GIRLFRIENDS? PLEASE WRITE. Box 21.9

NORWICH, Thetford, Ipswich area. Bi-male 41, personable, not overweight. Married, but independent social life with some weekday availability seeks like and open-minded folk for close and on-going friendship. Uninhibited cultural and esoteric intersts with the ability to play either active or passive roles. Discretion absolute. ALA - Promise! Box 21.10

Bi-Monthly Questionnaire

BI-MONTHLY
▽THE MAGAZINE FOR BISEXUALS

1) **How often do you read Bi-Monthly?**
☐ Every issue ☐ Most issues
☐ Occasionally ☐ This is the first time

2) **Do you subscribe to Bi-Monthly?**
☐ Yes ☐ No

3) **How do you receive your copy?**
☐ By Post ☐ Bookshop ☐ Meeting ☐ Friend
Other..

4) **How many people read this copy of Bi-Monthly?**
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11+

5) **Where do you live?** (City or Region) ....

6) **How do you identify yourself?**
☐ Bisexual ☐ Gay ☐ Lesbian ☐ Heterosexual
☐ Transexual Other ....

7) **Are you male** ☐ **or female** ☐ **?**

8) **What is your age?**
☐ Under 20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ Over 50

9) **Why do you read/buy Bi-Monthly?**
☐ To support a bisexual magazine
☐ To get information (contacts, listings, groups)
☐ To read articles ☐ To read letters ☐ To read news

Other ....

....

10) **What do you think of Bi-Monthly's:-?**

	Love	Hate	Indifferent
Book reviews	☐	☐	☐
Film Reviews	☐	☐	☐
Letters	☐	☐	☐
Articles	☐	☐	☐
News	☐	☐	☐
Listings	☐	☐	☐

11) What do you like about Bi-Monthly?

....

....

....

12) Which articles and features have you particularly enjoyed reading in this and previous issues?

....

....

13) What issues would you like to see covered by Bi-Monthly in the future?

....

....

14) Have you any ideas for sections or specific articles to be included in the magazine?

....

....

15) What changes would you like to see made to Bi-Monthly?

....

....

....

16) How can you help Bi-Monthly?

Writing letters or articles and sending them in
Helping to produce the magazine
Selling copies to local bookshops, at my group or club
I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to 'LBG' for £.......
Giving a regular donation to cover running costs
£5 per year ☐ £10 ☐ £20 ☐ £30 ☐ £50 ☐
Other..
....

If you can help please write your details here:-
Name ....
Address ....
....
Telephone..

Thankyou for completing this questionnaire. Please return it to Bi-Monthly, BM-BI, London WC1N 3XX.

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THIS ISSUE

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The opinions expressed in BI-MONTHLY are not necessarily those of the editor, or the London Bisexual Group, and, of course, Bi-Monthly cannot be completely representative of *all* bisexuals.

DEAR READER

if you liked this issue then why not take out a subscription - it will show your support and makes future planning much easier. And there are lots of advantages when you subscribe:

- ∇ Every issue despatched immediately it is published
- ∇ No extra charge for postage and packing
- ∇ No price increases for you during your subscription even if the cover price goes up
- ∇ No trouble buying your copy - Sold Out or Don't Stock It doesn't affect you

Convinced? Then just fill in the form and we get BI-MONTHLY posted to you under plain cover as soon as it is published.

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I subscribe to **BI-MONTHLY** from no. ___ at £4.50 for 4 issues incl. p&p. I enclose a cheque payable to 'LBG', plus a donation of £ ____

Name: ____________________

Address: ____________________

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Postcode: __________ Date: ________

Signature: ____________________

Return to:- **BI-MONTHLY, BM BI,**
LONDON WC1N 3XX.

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NEWS

NEWS ~ In Brief

US news -

AIDS Activists Outraged

A storm of protest arose against the content of an episode of the NBC programme 'Midnight Caller', forcing concessions from the makers.

In the original plot a bisexual man contracts AIDS from his male lover, and proceeds to deliberately infect women, one of whom is also pregnant. She then hunts down the villain and shoots him dead!

The Boston Bisexual Men's Network protest that the script is,

'loaded with outrageous stereotypes, and myths about AIDS. No distinction is made between being HIV positive and having Aquired Immune Defficiency Syndrome. It is assumed that a single sex act with a partner automatically means transmission of the virus, which in turn means certain death. Also in the show the case is made for compulsory testing.

Members of ACT-UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) and other groups disrupted filming of the episode, in noisy demonstrations. The main concession they obtained was a re-write in which the man is no longer shot dead, though activists are still unhappy with the show.

Bisexuality Is Real

A recent report in Californian magazine **'Bisexuality'** showed how,

'Almost without exception the gay/lesbian community accepts bisexuality as real (quite a change from a few years ago) and bisexuals are welcome to various degrees to be part of the gay rights movement'.

This is despite the fact that 'bisexuals still are invisible in the lesbian and gay community' and bisexuality 'hasn't been discussed in years, except with regard to AIDS'.

'...it must be bi people who make an issue of the issues, must define the issues, and bring them forward!'

These are editor Gary North's conclusions from interviews with seven leading lesbian/gay and civil rights activists in the USA. Under the title, 'DRAWING A FINE LINE' the questions asked were on the issue of 'How Gay and Lesbian Leaders Feel About Bisexuals and Bisexuality in Gay Rights Movement and Organizations'. All the interviews are reproduced at some length in the December issue of Bisexuality.

See **'INFORMATION'**, back page, for addresses).

Calling Bisexual Women!

Sue George is writing a book on women and bisexuality from a feminist perspective. It will look at the theories of sexuality and where bisexuality fits into them, and at the issues faced by bisexual women. It will also address the relationship between bisexual women and lesbians.

Sue is looking for bisexual women, from the widest range of possible backgrounds, prepared to fill in a questionnaire covering sexual behaviour, emotions, desire, background, politics, lifestyle etc. Sue guarantees anonymity. For a copy of the questionnaire contact:- Sue George, Box No 426, London SW9 9SE.

Calling Bisexual Men!

The Middlesex Hospital are conducting a major study of the lifestyles, attitudes and sexual behaviour of men who have sex with both women and men. They have already done a pilot study of eight volunteers, and have visited the London Bisexual Group, where they were surprised at the warmth of reception. They are looking for 100 bisexual men 'to help influence future health care and policy through better understanding'. If you want to learn more, contact:- Zoie Schramm-Evans 01 636 8333 ex 4875 or project administrator Marion Brooks, 01 961 9209.

The New Realism

Another salvoe in the continuing debate on bisexuality in feminism was fired by Melissa Benn in February's **'Spare Rib'**. Titled 'The Passion of Decency' Melissa strongly puts the case for a new direction in feminism, to 'recreate a democratic, optimistic and radical politics of sex for all women'.

John Marshall in **'Gay Times'**, January this year, caused a flood of letters in response to his article 'Flaunting it - the challenge of the 1990's' by saying that the gay counter to Section 28 that homosexuality can not be promoted is not true. He mentioned the work of Freud 'with his underlying emphasis on human bisexuality' and that of Kinsey. He also says, 'It seems that we need to develop a political strategy that acknowledges the complex and fluid nature of human sexuality'.

Channel Four's **'Out on Tuesday'** also put the view that homosexuality can be promoted, but without using the word 'bisexual' to describe someone who is attracted to both male and female.

BISEXUAL PROMOTIONS

BISEXUAL PROMOTIONS, The world's first bisexual theatre company (that we know of) are currently devising our first production "LIVE BISEXUALS ON STAGE!" - First Performance at the London Bisexual Group (upstairs at the Fallen Angel) on February 27th at 8.45 pm. We will be touring from early March - if you can help us with money or bookings, want to get involved in Bisexual Promotions, or want to get more information, please get in touch as soon as possible with Al on 01-241 0056 or Mark on 0482- 491 775.

BISEXUALS TARGETED IN AIDS CAMPAIGN

A proposal made by the Health Education Authority's (HEA) AIDS division to fund a special helpline for bisexuals was approved by the HEA executive at the end of January.

The first stage of the long awaited HEA 'safer sex' advertising campaign directed at men who have sex with men' was launched on February 6th. This phase will place ads in the gay press, and similar posters will be used in bars and social venues. They feature elegantly erotic pictures, by L.A photographer Herb Ritts and headline the virtues of masturbation and recommend trying 'new positions', simply explaining the risks of other specific activities. David Burkle, who has been representing the London Bisexual Group on the Advisory Panel, together with members of the Terrence Higgins Trust, Body Positive and London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard told us,

'The posters are attractive and the wording, though brief, is sensible and free of moral overtones. They continue the work already done by the Trust and Switchboard. Some of the earlier drafts of the wording and pictures were more explicit and would certainly have stimulated a lot of discussion, probably as much about censorship as 'safer sex' though! I think this is a good beginning for this campaign, and it will hopefully serve the secondary purpose of showing that the HEA can in fact do 'affirmative' safer sex advertising for gay men without the world falling apart.'

(ctd on p.6)

NEWS

Bi-Monthly is 21!

Not 21 years old, but this is the 21st issue, and worth celebrating! 21 is also significant as it is the gay male 'age of consent'. The spirit of the '67 Sexual Offences Act, which only partially decriminalised homosexuality, lives on in Section 28, an ironic 21st birthday present from Her Majesty's Government. We hope you will eat up this historic 21st issue, and that it'll give you strength to fight on!

Bi-Monthly - The Past

The first issue came out in 1984 as the Newsletter of the London Bisexual Group. It has developed as the bisexual movement has grown, and is now a fully fledged and respected magazine.

Last year's new sharpened image was praised by City Limits Magazine, and David Smith of Gay Times has congratulated us on daring to cover the issues that others don't dare to touch.

Bi-Monthly- The Future

Times, they are a changin'! Bisexuality has become an issue, both here and in the States, and bisexuals are getting organised! We have a phoneline, a National Network, the book 'Bisexual Lives', acceptance by two major lesbian and gay organisations, and a new energy and direction.

This issue marks an important point in the history of Bi-Monthly. It includes the first major advertising (and four extra pages), the first readers questionaire, more readers letters than ever and good feedback from the 6th Bisexual Conference. There have been regular magazine meetings held, at the CHE office, on Sundays, and more people are getting involved.

JOIN THE PARTY! - Monday March 6th at the LBG, London.

A couple of words from the Editor:-

Help Help!

How *you* can help!

'How can I help?' I hear you ask. Well, we always need more cartoons, graphics, photographs, poems, book reviews, film reviews. If you have any news, views, information let the world know through Bi-Monthly!

For those in London with time energy and enthusiasm, come along to the Magazine Meetings, for details:- contact the London Bisexual Group, or write to Bi-Monthly, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX.

For those with MONEY, we desperately need funds to get Bi-Monthly better advertised. So please send donations (large or small) to our 'Advertising Fund' (make cheques/postal orders payable to the 'LBC'). WE NEED YOU TO HELP US TO EXPAND!

How to write:-

For just £ 4.99 I could send you my book on 'Your guide to success in writing', but I'll save you the expense and reproduce the basics here. (It helps if you can read, and Bi-Monthly is an easy place to start).

Writing isn't as hard as you think! In fact thinking is the difficult bit! Think things through beforehand, decide on the main points you want to make (keeping letters especially short) and do some planning.

Phew, that's the inspiration over with, now for the perspiration. After an initial draft, unless you are a genius, the secret of producing a good piece is in the editing and re-writing. A good general rule is that you can cut at least a quarter of the length without losing anything, keeping things punchy, and to the point. Read it through (maybe aloud), see how it sounds. Get someone else to read and comment, or edit. You should reach a point where you cannot improve your work any more, and you sit back with that 'warm glow of satisfaction'. But don't relax for too long, this is the time to send a copy to Bi-Monthly, (with a telephone number and contact address). I hope we'll be hearing from you soon!

NEWS

(from p.4)

The second stage known for short as the **'bisexual campaign'** is due to start six to eight weeks later. This part of the campaign is aimed at all those men who have, or think about having sex with other men, but have no access to the gay press. So they can browse through them at their leisure, the advisory panel are recommending that double page ads similar in tone to the ads in the gay press appear in the full range of Sunday colour supplements. As far as we know the HEA project worker Dave Wiseman accepts this recommendation with the . proviso that the ads feature a solo male this time.

Getting safer gay sex ads of this nature into the mainstream press will be a real breakthrough, and another HEA inspired first is that they will advertise a special free phoneline for bisexuals. This will be an extension of the National AIDS helpline (NAH) run by the Broadcasting Support Services. There will be two lines in London and 2 in Glasgow, operating 40 hours a week each. Provided suitable people are available, the new lines will be staffed half by existing NAH workers and half by pople put forward by the Bi Groups in London and Edinburgh. NAH, LBG and EBG will jointly be training people to work on these lines. They will operate for eight weeks initially, whilst the advertising campaign is running.

Alan Jamieson director of the NAH told us,

'I see it as a vital part of an AIDS public education campaign, because it is facing up to the reality of life that men other than 'gay' do have sex with men. It exists in life whether people like it or not! I'm totally committed to the idea of this line and to its success. The helpline is a good medium for education because of its easy access and anonymity.'

LBG SEEKS SPACE AT THE CENTRE

The London Bisexual Group (LBG), looking for a bigger meeting space have re-applied to the London Lesbian & Gay Centre. The initial response seems to have been, 'We haven't got room for you, but we're not sure if we want you anyway'. However the latest reposnse from manager Martyn Gilbert seens to give more reason for hope.

The need for a new venue comes with increasing numbers and the loss of the small meeting room at the Fallen Angel. Hoping that time would have healed the wounds caused in the battles at the Lesbian and Gay Centre when it first opened in 1985, LBG reapplied in December 1988 for permission to meet there. After a written request was presented to the Centre Management Committee on 10th January, LBG were told by Manager Martyn Gilbert, that:-

(1) he has been asked to go back through the minutes to see if Bi groups can meet at the centre, or just individuals.

(2) The Management Committee feel that they may have to call another members' meeting to discuss this.

(3) Some individual members of the Centre who have heard of our request (and disapproved) are already talking about calling a meeting themselves, and

(4) The large meeting room is not free on any one same night regularly throughout the month.

On the latest contact Martyn Gilbert's line seems to be more hopeful. He told me that he personally has no problems about Bisexual Groups meeting at the Centre, and in fact he is enthusiastic that we should. However as the Centre is heavily booked he will cost out the possibility of opening for us on Monday evenings, when the centre has so far been shut.

YOUTH GROUP BANS BISEXUALS

Bisexuals at the Westminster Lesbian and Gay Youth Group have been banned from meetings of the organisation. This follows an incident at the group when a man, claiming to be bisexual, was responsible for 'chatting up' a lesbian. Bisexuals were asked to wait until a decision has been made on bisexual membership. At the group's Mangement Committee meeting, the decision was made to ban bisexuals, but a final decision depends on a consultation with bisexual members.

Group organisers have however given the Bisexual Youth Group support in its attempt to meet at the Centre autonomously.

CHE Protests at Centre's BISEXUAL BAN

John Jackson was astounded and angered when he was asked to take down a poster advertising the first meeting of the CHE Youth Group (for 'lesbians, gays and bisexuals') at the London Lesbian and Gay Centre and to cancel the meeting.

John was told in explanation that as the poster mentioned bisexuals and this is a 'lesbian and gay' centre the meeting could not go ahead. He later spoke to the centre manager Martyn Gilbert who said that it was his intention to change things but the way things were the decision had to stand.

On the 4th December John found that the gay press had advertised the meeting and he phoned again this time to be told that the meeting could go ahead, provided the posters did not go up in the Centre!

CHE (the Campaign for Homosexual Equality) has asked for an explanation saying,

"As you may know, CHE has from its very early days included bisexual women and men under the general heading of gay persons for whose rights we are committed to fight, and our most recent Annual Conference required the Executive Committee to include the word 'bisexual', in addition to 'lesbian and gay' in all our campaign literature.

We would be grateful if you would if you would provide us with a statement of your Centre's policy on the admission of bisexual persons to your premises. Should some kind of ban exist, we hope you will consider action to end it as soon as possible."

As yet there has been no reply.

Bisexual Conference Success!

The SIXTH NATIONAL BISEXUAL CONFERENCE, held at the end of October in London, was the biggest ever with 154 people. There was not quite enough room at the Friends Meeting House venue, so extra space was found at a nearby cafe and pub. There were many and varied workshops, just a few of which are printed in the following report, with more to follow in the next issue. There is also a full Conference Report in preparation.

The lively and friendly atmosphere of previous Conferences was there again, but what was new was an energy and a motivation to take the Bisexual Movement forward.

In particular, people from Stoke-on-Trent have already taken on the organising of next year's Conference. And the groups listed below, including a National Network, were formed as a result of discussions at the Conference:

Photo: David Smith 'Gay Times'

Black Bisexual Caucus

Last year's Conference for Gay Black men had a workshop on 'bisexuality', and in December last year Bi-Monthly received a full manifesto for the newly formed Black Bisexual Caucus, of which just the aims are printed here:-

"1) Our sexual liberation is an intergral part of the struggle against racism, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia and other forms of oppression.

2) To actively work towards giving bisexuals a positive, valid identity within the lesbian and gay movement, the black community and society in general.

3) To actively challenge in the media negative representation of different sexualities.

4) To work for an education in all schools which adequately reflects the diversity of human sexualities.

5) To raise the level of consciousness culturally and politically amongst other black bisexuals men/women on major, local national and international issues.

6) To work collectively and autonomoulsy with other local, national, and international black bisexual /lesbian and gay organisations.

7) To form an alliance with other black socio-political organisations whose aims are consistent with our own."

Carlton "Ajamu" Africa

For full copies of the MANIFESTO contact the RADICAL BLACK BISEXUAL CAUCUS, C/O BM BOX 4390, LONDON WC1N 3XX.

"SIEZE THE TIME"

National Networking

From the Campaigning Workshop came the idea of setting up a National Network of bisexual groups and individuals. It's function is to provide better communication, and to let people know the skills and resources we have available to us. This all needed more time to discuss, and an extra workshop was arranged, in which people from Hull agreed to take on the first three months of producing the Networking Sheet. They are taking on the next three months as well, passing the job on to another group at the end of this period. - see 'Humberside' in the new and expanding national list of contacts that the Networking has produced. The Bisexual phoneline (031 557 3620 Thurs. 7.30 - 9.30) should always be able to help you get in contact with the Network.

Youth Group Launched

London's latest addition to the Bisexual 'Scene' is a Youth Group. The Conference was the catalyst for the Bisexual Youth Group, which sees itself as a sister organisation to the Radical Black Bisexual Caucus, The Womens Group and the London Bisexual Group.

The groups aims are:

1) To create a space which does not currently exist for people coming from either a lesbian, gay or heterosexual perspective to discuss issues around their sexuality.

2) To meet the needs of young people from different backgrounds and to tackle discrimination based on ability, gender, race and class.

3) To encourage involvement from the Bisexual Movement's allies.

4) To make links with other lesbian, gay, bisexual and other youth groups.

REPORT

Photos: Ian Saxton

The Right Attitude

Lesbian and Gay Attitudes about Bisexuals and Vice Versa

I was asked to lead this workshop by a friend from the London Bisexual Group. It was a wonderful opportunity for me as a lesbian to think through the issues.

About 30 people came - lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual. The limited time (one hour) demanded concise contributions but it was clearly important that everyone had a chance to voice their individual perspective. I was very impressed by the clarity of questions and comments, that no one person dominated and that we laughed such a lot.

It was great to hear the POSITIVE ATTITUDES.

About bisexuals:- that you are warm; accepting; non-judgemental; don't appear to have exclusive cliques.

About lesbians and gays :- that we are strong; have put sexuality 'on the agenda'; refuse to abide by gender stereotypes.

The atmosphere was incredibly friendly and appreciative. As a lesbian, I loved hearing the bisexuals and I could see smiles and nods when we said our bit.

During the opening round people people had talked about oppression. The definitions I suggested were that lesbian and gay oppression exists and affects all of us. Bisexuals are often chronically mistreated by lesbians and gays, but not oppressed by us. Lesbians, gays and bisexuals are all the targets of oppression by a heterosexually biased society.

Possibly the most insidious effects of oppression is that the target group ends up believing the lies about them/us. So, **as lesbians and gays we end up believing:-** we are not good; we should live our lives separately; we have only limited options.

Many lesbians and gays will deny this and we place a lot of importance rightly on such slogans as 'Proud to be Gay'. **However, it's not surprising that:-** we come across as fierce in our insistence that we are proud; we create ghettoes; acceptance in our often tight-knit communities means conforming to a code of conduct about who we can get close to.

We have warm networks, a lot of laughs, beautiful relationships and we know the importance of the freedoms we are holding out for. But given this as a background it is small wonder we have such **NEGATIVE ATTITUDES about bisexuals, namely:-** betrayal: 'you are abandoning us' (eg. when a lesbian/gay man sleeps with someone of the opposite gender); 'you're greedy' 'you want everything - the best of both worlds'; lack of comprehension; 'you are copping out'.

Bisexuals have their own share of negative feelings. Bisexuals clearly end up feeling they have no home, no place you are accepted (except now the network of bisexuals being built up). As a lesbian I won't add extra comments but this is what appeared on the workshop list of **bisexual attitudes about lesbians and gays:-** frustration; 'you're self-righteous'; exclusivity; narrow-mindedness; factionalism.

What to do

For us as lesbians and gays around bisexuals:- to warmly welcome you in completely;- to never turn our backs on someone just because they've slept with the 'wrong' gender- to be light and playful when others are being tight and heavy talking about bisexuals; to listen respectfully; to not give up the expectation that you are there beside us.

For bisexuals around lesbians and gays:- to continue being as welcoming as you are - we may learn from you! to give up loudly insisting that everyone is bisexual 'really' - to accept and respect others' choices; to make contact with us, chat, before making an issue of being bisexual - we'll hear you better

For both:

to drop the competition about 'who's got it worse'.

Amanda Bailey

NOTE:- Many of the lesbians and gays were present as allies who, along with supportive heterosexuals, said nice things about the Conference in the 'Allies of Bisexuals Workshop'. This group continues to meet. Write to the LBG for details.

Different Strokes

The Conference produced two very different reports from the S/M Workshop

The discussion split into two groups, one for personal feelings on the subject and the other for information. Prior to this stage there was a short monolgue by a London Bisexual Group speaker who was a 'Femme Fatale' transvestite.

'I like to look two types of women, one who is the hard, dominant type, the other is a silly masochistic type. These two stereotype images of women are found at various clubs specialising in 'SM'.

'The dominant type orders men around and screams instuctions like an enraged mother. Failure to obey is followed by a slap or whipping. Men who indulge in this activity are called 'slaves'. The women who order around are called 'Mistresses'.

Arriving at the club one sees various mistresses at work in various darkened parts of the club. The sound of skin being slapped is heard occassionally during silent moments of the disco music. Most people there just glance at these demonstrations while dancing to the music. The dress code is black leather straps, troucers, miniskirts, stilletos and jackets. The emphasis seems to be on tight-fitting, constaining wear.

'There are other versions of S&M involving different combinations. I have attended a lesbian only SM event and a gay male only event where similar patterns are played out. The idea that any one activity or rôle is the preserve of one gender is not true of the SM scene. This gender freedom can be very liberating and gives people the scope to experiment. An important factor which maintains a form of control over the proceedings is the fact that there is always an audience. If the situation gets out of control and any one party feels it has to stop other persons may come to the rescue, if 'rescue' is the right word.

'S & M played out in private is a completely different affair. Since there are no observers, things may get out of hand. Personally I have had little experience of private SM. I have heard that couples get to know eachother very well and reach a level of intimacy not reached in the clubs. On the other hand I have heard how things could get out of hand. When S & M is played out in private trust is much more important.

'In the clubs, exhibitionism plays quite a big part in people's fantasies and for some private events seem dull.

Three women out of eight (and some men) present objected to the representation of S & M by the speaker. There was a vote taken during the workshop whether all the women present should leave the meeting. In the end no action was taken and the splitting of the workshop into two separate meetings seemed to satisfy these women.

The subject of SM has always been confronted very gently and the subject never covered explicitly. In a way the anger shown by the people to the subject showed and described in detail was useful in uncovering prejudices. A lot of people were unaffected by the workshop and expressed gratitude on being shown the 'inside story' rather than the usual vague explanations.

Corinthia Random

I went to the S&M workshop. It was a complete fiasco, a perfect example of why the shock and offensive icebreaking technique doesn't work.

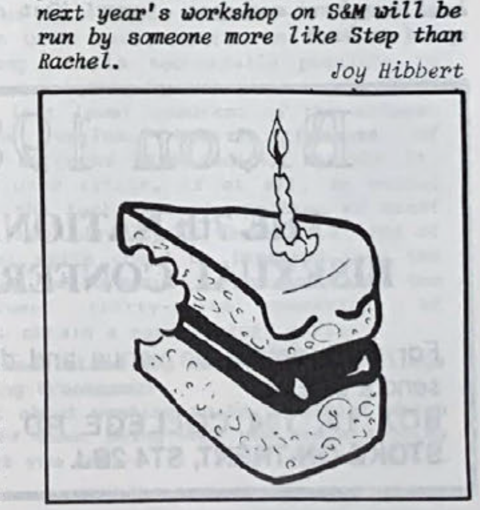
The facilitator was late so someone else took over. We'd made a fairly constructive start when Rachel, the facilitator arrived. He started by taking off his studded leather belt and beating the floor with it, asking if anyone wanted to join in. Then he talked about 15 minutes (it seemed longer) about his personal experience of thrashing rich businessmen who drive BMWs, making lots of offensive assumptions about sex roles and the nature of women in the process. Finally a woman managed to interupt and say what she thought of the the workshop so far. She felt hurt and offended, and no longer felt that she was in a safe space. Because of the nature of S&M, the assumptions about it and the ongoing debate in the feminist community, actually coming to a mixed workshop on S&M was quite a brave thing for women to do. She suggested that those women who also felt threatened should leave and hold their own workshop on the subject. A few men also objected to the assumptions Rachel expressed, and the way he had dominated, not allowing anyone else's opinions.

We re-started by me reading out the notes I had made before Rachel arrived. It became clear that we could be divided into two groups:- those who came to share the experiences, and those who came to get information. So we divided on these lines, with me leading the latter group.

I didn't do very well. I invited them to ask me questions, but they didn't know what questions to ask, so I didn't know what information to give. I tried to balance out what Rachel had said, by talking about S&M from my viewpoint (ie as part of a loving relationship and mental rather than purely physical), with particular emphasis on doing it with people you don't trust. One woman asked what the dangers were, as Rachel had given the idea that S&M was all about women/men dressed as women thrashing men. I tried to explain, then the subject got onto S&M clubs, the association between rubber/leather/pvc fetishism and S&M. Rachel assured one of the women that S&M clubs were safe and didn't have to be all that expensive. I tried to explain that it wasn't necessarily about fetishism. That was about it.

I thought that last year's S&M workshop run in a sensitive way by Step, a man with a good grasp of the politics of the subject, was far more constructive. I hope that next year's workshop on S&M will be run by someone more like Step than Rachel.

Joy Hibbert



An un-right-on Introduction - for Newcomers

For people new to bi meetings we played a game which Robyn Ochs uses in 'Bi intro evenings' in Boston, USA. Of course, at first, people were mostly shy and nervous when saying their names; then the atmosphere gradually eased as we got into thinking about stereotypes that go with the labels lesbian/gay/bisexual and hetero-sexual women and men. With huge sheets of paper on the floor, and beginning with the hair styles, working down, I drew all the suggestions people made. Nervous giggles grew to relaxed laughs, until even the most reserved of us were suggesting ideas. We ended up giving our characters favourite films, jobs (or not), names, pets etc, etc, finally even religious beliefs!

The paper became so filled up and messy that it would be totally unprintable (sorry ed, I know you're always on the look out for graphics).

For some reason both the female and male bisexuals sported NALGO badges, worked in the town hall and wore baggy trousers - her's flowing, his corduroy (did they wear anything else? - ed).

The game eased a lot of tension about whether we fitted in or not - no-one present fitted these stereotypes exactly and yet we all recognised something of ourselves in them. The characters we produced showed just what an un-right-on lot we were, but a lot of fun was had by all.

Massage

Massage is a unique way of communicating without words. I have never had a verbal conversation with my partner at this workshop, yet I see him occassionally at meetings and we say hello and smile fond smiles to eachother.

The leader did a beautiful job in the crowded, almost too cosy room. He guided us through a loosening up routine which got us all more in touch with our own bodies and instilled a wonderful peaceful atmosphere in the room. Then we paired up, each beginner with someone who had done some massage before and exchanged head and hand massages - mmmm! What a lovely way to spend an hour.

Claire

Bicon 1989

THE 7th NATIONAL BISEXUAL CONFERENCE

For more details on venue and dates, please send a SAE to:

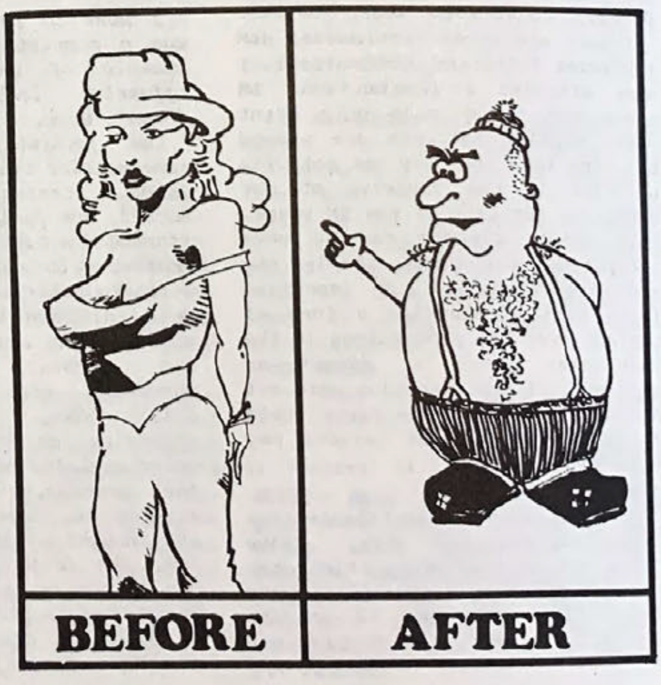
BOX 15, 104 COLLEGE RD, SHELTON,
STOKE-ON-TRENT, ST4 2BJ.

Transexuality -

a female to male perspective

Many Feminists say transexuals are just the 'victims' of sex role stereotyping. **Monica Schultz** claims that they simply don't understand. She takes a personal look at the subject of transexuality, in a form which we rarely hear about:-

> **"As a scholar, Janice Raymond explains the 'how' and 'where' of transexualism. As a compassionate critic and feminist, she also analyses the 'why', the false and cruel sex rôles, so restricting of full humanity that some individuals choose to surgically mutilate their bodies in order to escape."**
>
> \- Gloria Steinem about Janice Raymonds book 'The Transsexual Empire' published by the Womens' Press 1979.



'I feel male. I think male. And I find myself behaving male'.

Janice Raymond is an assistant professor of Women's Studies and Ethics at Hampshire College and the University of Massachusetts. Intelligent and probably very educated, no doubt, but neither Gloria nor Janice are at all able to see the real, the deep down emotional point about transexuality.

From my very own feelings and experiences I dare to disagree strongly with the whole point made by this book, which I take, in this article, as expressing a very common view of transexuality.

Ever since I can remember, and still to this day, despite being born as a woman, I wanted a male body. I felt this long before I had any political conceptions of 'rôle behaviour'. I believe I am now, more than ever, able to judge that my attraction was entirly internal. The desire was enormous and if I had a choice I would definitely go for a male body. I feel male. I think male. And I find myself behaving male. However, much female has been put into me over a long period which sometimes leaves me feeling confused (in a more positive than negative way, in that my horizons are usually widened).

If you held a poll with the question,
"WHAT IS A TRANSEXUAL?",
I dare to state that the vast majority would answer something along the lines of 'it's a man who wants to be a woman'.

Again, in the same way that lesbians are invisible because of the overall oppression of women's sexuality, female to male transexuals are also believed not to exist.

I don't deny that in this society a male has many advantages. But my desire was a different sort. Every human being longs to be able to love themselves to an extent that feelings like self-consciousness and shyness can be at a minimum. We all have different desires as to what our bodies should look or be like, and these desires have always existed, but have been misused for reasons of politics and fashion. Our society is too quick to condemn, and label as diseased, feelings different from what people believe the majority to feel.

I no longer seriously consider surgery, as I did strongly ten years ago. My reasons are that I am very distrustful of modern medicine and science. Especially after my mother's recent death from cancer, or rather from the surgery and treatments which had been done to her body after a cancerous tumour was found. Also I am politically opposed to the idea of spending that much money on surgery. I don't see why I or anybody should have to.

Besides I am entirely unconvinced by the information which I have gathered on (what in scientific terms is called) 'female-to-constructed-male-surgery'.

Here in brief are the details:-

The sex change surgery begins (as the one for males does) with hormone treatment. Androgen is injected to stop menstruation, to stimulate hairgrowth on the face and body and to lower the voice. Long term administration of testosterone often increases the size of the clitoris. Long term androgen therapy has side effects of acne attacks and libido increases.

The technique of creating an erect penis has not yet been developed.

Sugery involves several steps:-. phallus construction, when undertaken, begins in conjunction with a hysterectomy. It is technically possible to construct a penis surgically by rotating a tube flap of skin from the left lower quadrant of the abdomen and closing the vagina. However because of complication most surgeons have decided against it. The penis can be used little, if at all, in sexual activities, since the technique of creating an erect penis has not yet been developed. There is a kind of rod like stiffener which could be inserted into the skin but the actual performance is not promised. One transexual underwent thirty-three operations of plastic surgery to obtain a satisfactory penis.

People have to understand the depth of the feelings involved with being transexual.

And that is not about wanting to be something which you are not. It is about being what you are and being recognised as what you are:-

- A TRANSEXUXUAL
- not a disease.

THEY USED TO SAY MASTURBATION WAS BAD FOR YOU. NOW IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE.

The threat of AIDS has not gone away.

It's not all doom and gloom though.

There's one way you can avoid ever coming into contact with HIV.*

Safer Sex.

Okay, we admit it doesn't sound desperately exciting. But don't let the name put you off.

Safer sex simply means any activity where infected blood or semen (or vaginal fluid) can't enter your body.

Like bodyrubbing, fingering, mutual masturbation or massage.

Oral sex may carry some risk if the person sucking has cuts or sores in their mouth, and possibly if infected semen is swallowed.

Unprotected anal intercourse, however, still carries the highest risk of any sexual activity.

Even if you do use a condom it won't make it completely safe.

If you'd like more information or advice, ring your local helpline.

Or call the National AIDS Helpline free of charge on 0800 567123.

It's open 24 hours a day and it's completely confidential.

HEALTH EDUCATION AUTHORITY

*Human Immunodeficiency Virus: the virus that can lead to AIDS.

PLAYSAFE '88 - A SAFER SEX WORKSHOP

Twenty men and forty women and two facilitators tried to condense the 'American safety net party' from three hours to one hour. It was impossible, we needed smaller groups and more time. We did learn that in both sections the range of our awareness and probably our sexual practice varied a lot. Also it became evident that playing relay games with condoms and rubber dildos is a great idea for men and not such a good idea for English women in mixed company!

Passing around strawberry and peppermint latex squares for HIV protection in oral sex with a woman caused interest and hilarity, and do any dentists in the UK use them, because this is their source in the USA? They call them dental dams.

What turns us on** (safe and unsafe) **is listed below, interesting, huh!

MEN:-

ART
CATS
CLOTHES
RUGBY KIT
RIPE BODIES
EARLOBES
BOTTOMS
NIPPLES
COCKS
FUR
WHISPERS
WARMTH
SMELL
LUST
LOVE
FEAR
GOOD FOOD & DRINK
SMILING EYE
UNDERWEAR
FACES
TOES
MOUTH
HAIR
HAIRY ARMPITS
SILK
MUD
WANTING TALKING
TOUCHING
IMAGINATION
TENDERNESS
HUGS
PAIN
S&M
SHOWERS
MOVEMENT
INTERCOURSE
MASTURBATION
PARTNER'S SEXUAL PLEASURE
POWER
KISSING
SHARED FANTASIES
LOOKING
SUCKING

WOMEN:-

ALCOHOL
SMILES
SUNLIGHT
SILK
CUDDLING
DANCING
DANCING SLOW
VIBRATOR
SHOWERS
ARMPITS
EYE CONTACT
ACTING OUT YOUR FANTASIES
BREEZES ON NAKEDNESS
HAVING YOUR NIPPLES SUCKED
RUNNING FINGERS THROUGH HAIR
BEING TOUCHED GENTLY & SENSITIVELY
BEING LICKED BY WOMEN WITH LONG HAIR
HAVING BACKS OF KNEES TICKLED
HAVING BREASTS STROKED
GIVING SOMEBODY A HAND JOB
STROKING
LICKING
KISSING BACKS
KISS
MASSAGE
INTERCOURSE
DRUGS
BREAKFAST IN BED
FUR
HOLDING HANDS
SWIMMING NAKED
SHARING BATHS
SHARING FOOD
HOT OILY BATHS
STROKING HAIR
BREASTS
FEET TOUCHING
TALKING ABOUT IT
FACES TOUCHING FACES
CLITORAL STIMULATION
BEING FUCKED IN THE ARSE
SQUEEZING BOTTOMS
NOT BEING TOUCHED
NAKED BODY HUGS
SKILLED KISSING
FOOT MASSAGE
ORAL SEX

SAFE SEX GUIDELINES For Bisexual and Heterosexual Women

Lesbians are the lowest 'risk group' when it comes to HIV infection (the virus responsible for AIDS), though some may be involved in other riskier activities, such as injecting drugs, and heterosexual activity. Bisexual women and heterosexual women who are or have been sexually active with men are thought to be in a higher risk group.

For safer sex avoid sexual activity that involves contact with body fluids. HIV is transmitted through direct contact with infected blood, semen, urine, faeces and possibly vaginal secretions.

Safe Sex

Massage, hugging, body to body rubbing, kissing (dry and wet - French), voyeurism, exhibitionism, fantasy, touching your own genitals (masturbation - you can masturbate yourself while your partner does the same), S/M activities that do not involve exchanging body fluids, and virtually any other activity that does not require sharing or contact with body fluids.

Low Risk Sex

Vaginal or anal intercourse with a latex condom, cunnilingus/oral sex or fellatio/blow jobs with a latex barrier, genital or anal contact with hand or fingers (including fisting and hand jobs) while wearing latex gloves, external water sports (pissing).

UNSAFE SEX

Unprotected cunnilingus/oral sex (especially during menstruation since menstrual blood is currently considered to be the same as any other type of blood), unprotected oral-anal contact (rimming), unprotected hand-vagina or hand-anal contact (including unprotected fisting), semen, urine, faeces in the mouth or vagina (unprotected vaginal or anal intercourse, fellatio/blow jobs), sharing sex toys that have come into contact with body fluids.

Guidelines: - *from Lyon/Martin Women's Health Services, California.* ***For more information*** *contact one of the AIDS Helplines advertised on the opposite page.*

HEALTH EDUCATION AUTHORITY

AIDS HELPLINE DIRECTORY

Although the list is not a complete directory of all local helplines and services, the organisations can not only provide information about HIV/AIDS and safer sex, they can also provide you with additional information on how to contact other local services or groups such as Bodypositive.

National Aids Helpline
24 HOURS 0800 567123
For people who are deaf or hard of hearing
VISTEL DAILY 10am-10pm 0800 521361
Staffed by people speaking **Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu**
WED 6pm-10pm 0800 282445
Staffed by people speaking **Cantonese and Mandarin**
TUES 6pm-10pm 0800 282446
Staffed by people speaking **Arabic**
WED 6pm-10pm 0800 282447

Terence Higgins Trust
DAILY 3pm-10pm 01 242 1010
For people who are deaf or hard of hearing
VISTEL DAILY 7pm-10pm 01 405 2463

Bisexual Phoneline
THURS 7.30pm-9.30pm 031 557 3620

NATIONAL HELPLINES

Body Positive
For people who are HIV antibody positive
(Don't be put off by the switching mechanism delay)
DAILY 7pm-10pm 01 373 9124

London Lesbian & Gay Switchboard
For lesbians and gay men
24 HOURS 01 837 7324

Frontliners
For people with AIDS or ARC
Minicom facilities and ansaphone
MON-FRI 10am-5pm 01 404 4324

Frontliners (West London)
MON-FRI 10am-5pm 01 376 5751/2/3

Mainliners
For drug users DAILY 2pm-8pm 01 738 7333

LOCAL HELPLINES IN ENGLAND, BY TOWN OR METROPOLITAN AREA

BOSTON
Boston AIDS Helpline
TUES, WED 9.15am-10.15am and
THURS 11.15am-1.15pm 0205 54462

BOURNEMOUTH
Dorset Community AIDS Support
MON-FRI 8pm-10pm 0202 424442

BRADFORD/AIREDALE/CALDERDALE
Pennine AIDS Link
MON, TUES 7.30pm-9.30pm 0274 732939

BRIGHTON
Sussex AIDS Helpline
DAILY 8pm-10pm 0273 571660

BRISTOL
Aled Richards Trust
MON-FRI 7pm-9pm 0272 273436

BURNLEY
Burnley AIDS Helpline
TUES, FRI 7pm-10pm 0282 831101

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge AIDS Helpline
TUES, WED 7.30pm-10pm and
SAT 12 noon-2pm 0223 69765

CHESTER
Chester And District AIDS Relief (CADAR)
MON, FRI 7.30pm-10pm 0244 390300

COLCHESTER
Colchester AIDS Support and Counselling Group (CASAC)
TUES, FRI 7.30pm-10pm 0206 42980

DERBY
Derby AIDS Line
MON-FRI 7pm-9pm
THURS 2pm-4pm and 7pm-9pm 0332 290766

EXETER
Exeter AIDS Line
MON, WED, FRI 7pm-10pm 0392 411600

FOLKESTONE
Folkestone AIDS Helpline
FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 7pm-10pm 0303 41444

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Gloucestershire AIDS Line
WED 7pm-9pm 0242 580882

GRANTHAM
Grantham AIDS Helpline
MON, FRI 9am-10am and
WED 1.30pm-3pm 0476 60192

GREATER MANCHESTER
Manchester AIDS Line
MON-FRI 7pm-10pm 061 228 1617
Rochdale AIDS Helpline
MON 2pm-6pm 0706 755024

GRIMSBY
Grimsby AIDS Line
MON, THURS 7.30pm-9.30pm 0472 240840

HARLOW
Harlow and District AIDS Support
SUN 4pm-6pm 0279 39199

HARROGATE
AIDS Concern North Yorkshire
MON, THURS 7pm-9pm 0423 505222

HUDDERSFIELD
Kirklees AIDS Line
DAILY 7pm-11pm 0484 434825

HULL
AIDS Action North Humberside
MON, TUES, SAT 10am-2pm
TUES, THURS 7pm-9pm 0482 27060 (Hull)
WED, SUN 7pm-10pm 0482 870451 (Beverley)
FRI 9pm-1am 0262 400440 (Bridlington)

LANCASTER
North Lancashire and South Cumbria AIDS Line
MON 7pm-10pm 0524 841011

LEEDS
Leeds AIDS Advice 0532 444209
MON-THURS 8pm-10pm and FRI 7pm-9pm

LEICESTER
Leicester Lesbian and Gayline
MON-FRI 7.30pm-10.30pm 0533 550667

LINCOLN
Lincoln AIDS Helpline
MON, WED 5pm-7pm 0522 45371

LIVERPOOL
Merseyside AIDS Support Group
MON, WED, FRI 7pm-10pm 051 709 9000

LONDON
Ealing AIDS Response Service
MON, WED 6pm-9pm 01 993 0011/8872

MANSFIELD
Mansfield AIDS Helpline
MON 2pm-9pm TUES 9am-9pm and
WED, THURS, FRI 10am-12pm 0623 642814

MARGATE
East Kent AIDS Helpline
MON-FRI 7pm-10pm 0843 298610

MILTON KEYNES
Milton Keynes Gay Switchboard
MON, THURS 7pm-9pm 0908 312196

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE
AIDS North
WED, FRI 7pm-10pm 091 232 2855

NORTHAMPTON
AIDS Counselling and Education Service
MON-FRI 9am-5pm 0604 28999

NORWICH
Norwich AIDS Helpline
THURS 8pm-10pm 0603 615816

NOTTINGHAM
Nottingham AIDS Information Project
MON-WED 7pm-10pm 0602 585526

OXFORD
OXAIDS
SUN, MON, WED, FRI 6pm-8pm 0865 728817

PETERBOROUGH
Peterborough AIDS Helpline
TUES, THURS 7.30pm-9.30pm
0733 62334/311555

PORTSMOUTH
Portsmouth AIDS Line
THURS 7.30pm-10pm 0705 672666

READING
Reading AIDS Line
MON, THURS 8pm-10pm 0734 503377

RUNCORN
Halton AIDS Information and Support Group
MON-FRI 9am-5pm 09285 67736

SAINT ALBANS
The Crescent
MON 7pm-9.30pm 0727 44230
(In Hemel you can ring 0442 42042 which switches you automatically to the above number)

SALISBURY
Salisbury AIDS Helpline
WED 7pm-9pm and
THURS 6pm-8pm 0722 411064

SHEFFIELD
Sheffield AIDS Line
MON, THURS 7pm-10pm 0742 755500

SHREWSBURY
Shrewsbury AIDS Helpline
MON, WED, THURS 2pm-5pm 0743 232748

SLOUGH
East Berkshire AIDS Helpline
MON 9.30am-10pm
TUES, THURS 9.30am-8pm and
WED, FRI 9.30am-5.30pm 0753 692401

SOUTHAMPTON
Solent AIDS Line
TUES, THURS
SAT 7.30pm-10pm 0703 637363
AIDS Line Southampton
FRI 7.30pm-10pm 0703 339467

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA
Essex AIDS Helpline
DAILY 6pm-10pm 0702 460380

STAFFORD
Mid-Staffordshire AIDS Line
MON-FRI 9am-5pm 0785 52222

STEVENAGE
AIDS Helpline Stevenage & North Herts
TUES, THURS 7.30pm-10pm 0438 740270

SURREY
Surrey AIDS Helpline
TUES, WED, FRI 8pm-10pm 0483 300150

WATFORD
Watford AIDS Support Group
TUES, THURS 7pm-10pm 0923 33917

WEST MIDLANDS
AIDS Line West Midlands
MON-FRI 7.30pm-10pm 021 622 1511
AIDS Lifeline
MON-FRI 10am-7pm 021 235 3535
Dudley Information AIDS Line (DIAL)
MON 7pm-9.30pm 0384 53037
WED 7pm-9.30pm 0384 390390

WINDSOR
Windsor Area AIDS Support Group
WED, FRI 8pm-10pm 0753 693050

HELPLINES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

BELFAST
AIDS Helpline (Northern Ireland)
MON, WED, FRI 7.30pm-10pm and
SAT 2pm-5pm 0232 326117

HELPLINES IN SCOTLAND

EDINBURGH
Scottish AIDS Monitor (SAM)
MON-FRI 7.30pm-10pm
031 558 1167/557 1757

HELPLINES IN WALES

BRECON
Powys AIDS Line Services (PALS)
Llinell Wasanaethau AIDS Powys
WED 8pm-11pm 0597 4200 (English speaking)
SAT 9pm-midnight 0597 2800 (Welsh speaking)

CARDIFF
Cardiff AIDS Helpline
MON-FRI 7pm-10pm 0222 223443

HAVERFORDWEST
Dyfed AIDS Helpline
MON, FRI 8pm-10pm 0437 4545 x 405

NEWPORT
Gwent AIDS Helpline
MON-FRI 9am-5pm and
TUES 5pm-8pm 0633 422 532

SWANSEA
Swansea AIDS Helpline
West Glamorgan AIDS Project
THURS 3pm-8pm 0792 456303

HELPLINES IN THE CHANNEL ISLES

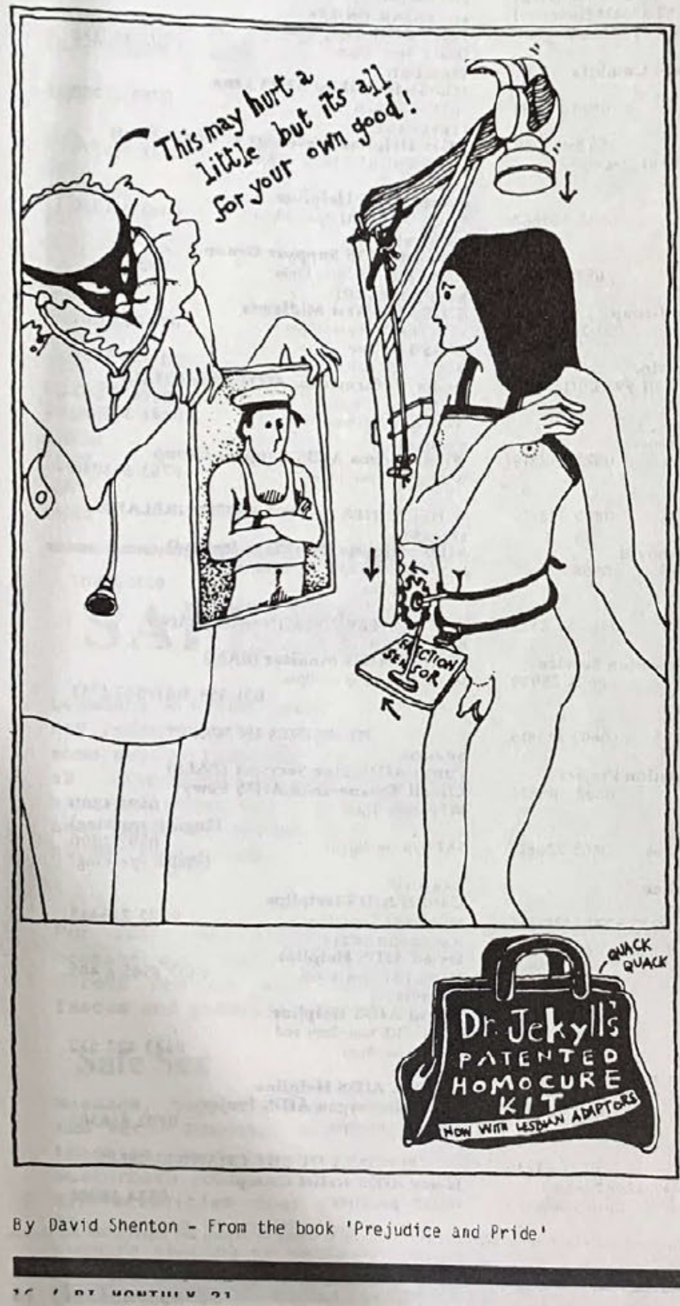
Jersey AIDS Relief Group
DAILY 7pm-11pm 0534 58886

This directory has been compiled in conjunction with NOVOAH (Network of Voluntary Organisations in AIDS/HIV) and NAM Limited (National AIDS Manual), to whom we express our appreciation and thanks.

Diagnosis: Homosexual

The Psychonazis

Psychiatry for a long time has played a part in the oppression of homosexuality, both in terms of the dubious treatments it offers, and in terms of the dangerous ideas it helps perpetuate. **Mario Mieli** has come up with the word 'Psychonazis' to mean those in the medical profession who define homosexuality as an illness, and thus implying in theory at least that it is cureable. This is the fourth in a series of articles by Martin Burgess looking at the ideas in Mieli's classic book **'Homosexuality and Liberation'.**


This may hurt a little but it's all for your own good!
FRICTION SENSOR
QUACK QUACK
Dr. Jekyll's PATENTED HOMOCURE KIT
NOW WITH LESBIAN ADAPTORS

By David Shenton - From the book 'Prejudice and Pride'

The American Psychiatric Association only ceased to classify homosexuality as a psychiatric disorder in 1973, after persistent campaigning by the American gay movement.[1] The World Health Organisation will only cease to classify homosexuality as an illness in 1991.

In this country today lesbian, gay and bisexual children are forced to see psychiatrists, and adults not knowing where to turn to, or not being able to cope with the pressures of living in a hostile society, seek help from the medical profession, and are referred to psychiatrists. The help they get varies from those who tow the new American line, to the old fashioned ones who still cling to their prejudices.

Not long ago the treatment received included aversion therapy (often involving electric shocks or nausea inducing drugs) or chemical castration. These barbaric methods are now, on the whole, reserved for those who are attracted to children.[2] Pre - 1967, and afterwards with the 'age of consent' set at 21 it was not hard to find prisoners willing to do anything to reduce their sentances. The increasing number of pedophiles behind bars provide a new source of people 'seeking treatment'.

IN THE BEGINNING there were just homosexual acts which the Church labelled as sinful, along with other forms of non-procreative sex. Medical science, from the mid-nineteenth century catagorised these as 'perversions', and adopted homosexuality as a subject for theories and experiments. In effect there was a new church, that of psychiatry, 'with a vested interest in diagnosing as mentally ill as many people as possible'.[3] The influence of the new church was important in the build-up to the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1967. It was argued that homosexuality was a 'condition' deserving an element of sympathy and understanding, while of course remaining a legitimate subject for medical concern and treatment. A gay male 'age of consent' of 21 was chosen, because it was felt that **'a youth of 16 plus, whose sexual orientation may not be fixed and stable, should receive some protection from undue influence by older persons'.**[4] This is the ideology of oppression behind Section 28, of the Local Government Act.[5]

After early medical theories of biological causes (imbalance of hormones), or inheritance, floundered due to the fact that the evidence did not fit, it was left to the psychiatrists to build a distorted picture of homosexuality. The common themes of the cause of homosexuality as an illness or neurosis include: theories around the Oedipus Complex - in particular mother dominance; fixation at the sadistic-anal stage of development; corruption. Most psychoanalysts regard homosexuality as a form of retarded development, and therefore theoretically amenable to cure by prolonged (and painful) psychological treatment.

Mieli gives examples of just how absurd the logic of the psychonazis was, and turns the arguments back on themselves. He shows how the early psychonazis, such as Ferenczi, named two types of homosexuals, 'subject/object homoerotics' (the passive 'female' ones) and the 'subject homoerotics' (the active 'male' ones). In a similar way the majority of psychiatric studies have also used the categories of 'male' and 'female', interpreting things only in terms of their sexist and heterosexist stereotypes. As Mieli puts it,

'psychoanalysis weighed down with prejudices, applies categories taken over from the typical heterosexual view of homosexuality,....sowing illusions, erecting obstacles to criticism and reinforcing the prevailing ideology'.

Some psychonazis distinguish between 'true' homosexuality ('a man with feminine impulses is attracted to a man with masculine impulses and a masculine body') and 'pseudo' homosexuality (all other forms which do not mimic heterosexuality). This provokes a sharp reply from Mieli, the 'radical queen'.

"..It is not however a case of 'true sexual inversion' when a man with masculine impulses is attracted to a man with a 'feminoid' body but with 'masculine impulses'... We queens know perfectly well that there is no such thing as an incorrigible heterosexual. You only need to catch him at the right moment (nor does it matter whether his body is 'feminoid' or 'masculine'). There is nothing more gay than fucking with a guy who was convinced that he didn't feel any sexual attraction for other men, and who then thanks to your artistry in seduction, suddenly starts to burn with desire in your arms. The medical differentiation between 'true' and 'pseudo' homosexuality is a castle in the air. Homosexuality is always true, and it truely exists even when it is not apparent, ie when it is still latent."

The invention of 'pseudo' homosexuality helps the straight psychologists deal with the worrying occurrence of homosexuality in all-male 'communities' - prisons, ships etc.

"In actual fact we have to recognise here too, manifest expressions of homo-erotic desire which while previously latent, now comes to the surface given the particular environmental conditions."

Less fascist 'experts' take the view that homosexuality is a neurosis with people who,

'instead of being proud of their condition, are ashamed of it, and try to escape from it.'

Mieli claims 'But then we could also define as neurotic those heterosexuals who so desperately seek to deny that they have heterosexual impulses, ...what is neurotic about them is precisely that they are closet queens. Those homosexuals who are afraid of being so are neurotic, but so is this heterosexual society which rejects homoeroticism, deeming it shameful and base and condemning it to latency or marginalisation.'

But when a 'self-confessed homosexual' does seek a 'cure' (due to the pressures placed on individuals by a homophobic society), then psychotherapy has to recognise that **'the results are virtually zero'.**

According to Freud, the best that so-called 'therapy' can do is,

'..making access to the opposite sex possible to a person restricted to homosexuality, thus restoring his full bisexual functions. After that it lay within him to choose whether he wished to abandon the path that is banned by society, and in some cases he has done so.'

As Mieli puts it:-

'You can't be cured of a disease you haven't got!'

---

1) Referred to in the chapter 'The Medical Profession' by John Marshall in the book 'Prejudice and Pride', (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1983).
2) Covered by 'OVEREXPOSED: Treating Sexual Perversion in America' by Sylvere Lotringer (Pantheon, N.Y., 1988).
3) From 'PSYCHIATRY and the HOMOSEXUAL, A brief analysis of oppression'. (Gay Liberation Information Service, 1978).
4) From 'Homosexuality' by D.J. West (Penguin Books, 1960).
5) Analysed by John Marshall in 'Flaunting It - The Challenge of the 1990's', 'Gay Times', January 1989.

BISEXUALS WARNED!

In Issue 50 of the Pink Paper a letter from 'Project SIGMA' warned of dubious research into sexual orientation and cognitive ability. Researchers from the Psychology Department of Goldsmith's College had written letters in the gay press and attended the London Bisexual Group in search of bisexual men to take part in the study. 'Project SIGMA' (a gay run group doing research into the sexual lifestyles of gay and bisexual men) warned:-

"As far as we know the theory that lies behind the research is that there is a common biological factor behind sexual orientation and cognitive ability. This derives from some experiments which show that on some psychological tests, gay men perform more like women than (presumably heterosexual) men. Leaving aside the cheap jibe that most of us could find some gay men who performed almost any task more like a woman than a man, it is far from clear why these differences should be the result of any one biological factor. We believe that homosexuality is biologically, psychologically and culturally complex and that it is simplistic to reduce that rich diversity to a single explanatory factor, and we fear that behind the research for a cause is a hope for a cure.

We also believe that the research contains another familiar fallacy. Put crudely it runs like this: There are men and there are women. Gay men are not real men. Therefore they must be like women, hence scientists look for 'female' hormones or other biological markers that distinguish men from women. We susupect that the Goldsmith's researchers are looking for bisexuals because they fall 'between' real men and gay men. This is just plain silly.

In any case who are these bisexuals they are looking for? Do they mean those who currently have both male and female sexual partners, those who have in the past had sex with at least one man and one woman, or those who would call themselves bisexual irrespective of their current or past sexual experience? Such wooliness does not inspire confidence in the scientific credibility of the research. "

My comment would be to say that Project SIGMA are right. In a society which screws people up by imposing stereotypes, forcing men and women into roles that are limiting and harmful, we do not need the sort of pseudo-psychological bullshit that attempts to add a scientific veneer of respectability to the prejudices of sexism and homophobia. Money and time would be better spent on research into the negative effects of prejudice and the repression of sexuality. - Editor.

INTERVIEW

Neighbours

Not far from here, just across the North Sea, lies a country which in many ways is a million miles from here. Helped by an atmosphere of 'tolerance', the Dutch Lesbian and Gay Movement has made many gains. This however has not been matched with a corresponding awareness and acceptance of bisexuality. In effect homosexuality has not been fully integrated into dutch society, rather a homosexual minority has won the right to be tolerated (accepted and respected even). **Fred Teunissen** is seeking to improve the position of bisexuals in Nijmegen, by his work in the lesbian and gay magazine **PINK** and in the setting up of a bisexual group. He is interviewed here by **Martin Burgess**:-

Maandblad van de N.V.I.H. COC-afdeling Nijmegen Jrg. 8 / N° 7 / Sep 88 / f.2,00

MARTIN:- Could you introduce yourself and describe yourself in brief?

FRED:- Well, as you can see I'm male, thirty six years old, I was educated to be a journalist, and at this moment I'm voluntarily working as an editor of PINK magazine, which is a gay and lesbian magazine in Nijmegen, and I also am a member of the recently formed bisexual group in the city.

MARTIN:- Can you tell us about bisexuality as it's described in PINK.

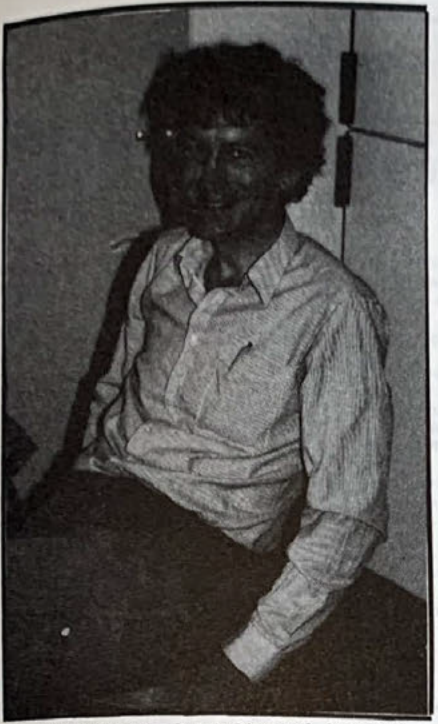
FRED:- Well, I started it in January. I chose the title 'GOBI', for a number of reasons, one of them was that in English it could be read as 'GO BI', I don't know whether that's correct English. It sounds like 'come and join us'. Also GOBI is a desert and many bisexual people feel as if they are in a desert, with few points of recognition within the social climate and their surroundings. I am dealing in that column with different ideas, such as bisexual identity, monogamy, the relation between bisexual people and the gay and lesbian movement, these kinds of subjects, book reviews.

MARTIN:- So you're aiming at lesbian and gay people as well as bisexual people?

FRED:- First and foremost bisexual, because I assume that in the readership there is a percentage of bisexual people, and the other aim is clearing the minds of other people on the subject of bisexuality.

MARTIN:- So what would you say are the general attitudes towards bisexuality in the lesbian and gay movement from individuals within that movement?

FRED:- In Holland, in general, I think it's very problematic, there are prejudices which bisexuals



Fred Teunissen - Dutch Bisexual Activist -

themselves do not do enough to counter. I think that when you are more positive in rejecting prejudices and come out and be open, you could gain more tolerance, or even acceptance, than when you're very shy you have those prejudices in your own head.

MARTIN:- What would you say is the general political stance of the lesbian and gay movement now, like the bigger organisations. Do they mention bisexuality, do they have official documentation on bisexuality?

FRED:- As far as the gay organisations are concerned there's hardly anything, except occassionally they happen to mention 'lesbian, gay and bi' in their leaflets, etc. Some youth organisations do, but fewer organisations for adult gay men, do. There are exceptions for some of the lesbian organisations in Holland, one of the biggest (71-52) has a section involved with bisexuality.

MARTIN:- Why do you think it may be that youth organisations will mention bisexuality, where others don't?

FRED:- Partly because they think that people who are very young label themselves to be bisexual, but when they grow up they'll become properly gay or lesbian. Other groups have many young people, who don't want to identify as either gay or lesbian, and that's a serious thing, and those organisations have been forced apparantly to accept bisexuality.

MARTIN:- Would it be nothing to do with maybe younger people being more radical in their politics, that as well?

FRED:- I think that's maybe the most important thing, because I think youth organisations were more or less forced to include bisexuality in their politics, because young people wanted them to do it.

MARTIN:- Can you tell us about the Nijmegen group, when you set that up and how it's going now?

FRED:- I started by publicising the formation of a group in my column some months ago.

MARTIN:- Have you had a good response from that?

FRED:- A small response, one or two people, and others have come into the group, because I'm a contact person, for the National Network of Bisexuality.

MARTIN:- Have you had any meetings of the group?

FRED:- Yes, so far there have been three or four. In the beginning we said we wanted to form a group of activists, because that's important for continuity, so the group should study, read important literature on bisexuality. Nowadays we think we should also do more things about social content, and maybe some conselling, so the group now has two main functions. We are intending to start next month a kind of open evening, where all kinds of people can come and where there is a speaker, and afterwards a drink at the bar and a chat etc.

MARTIN:- So what are your hopes for the group?

FRED:- My hopes! My hope is that it becomes rather a strong organisation, on one hand, and on the other, that it could be attractive for a wide range of people, including homosexual and heterosexual people.

MARTIN:- What is, in the Netherlands, the general attitude of heterosexual people to bisexuality.

FRED:- I think they think it is threatening, because it confronts them with their own homophobia. I think for them that it is even more threatening than for the gay and lesbian people I know. They are also frightened because they tend to think that it threatens their identity. So we are confronted with a lot of fear, fear of a sexual identity that is not fixed, not one of the two.

MARTIN:- Did you have much opposition from people in PINK itself for your bisexual page.

GOBI
Berichten uit niemandsland

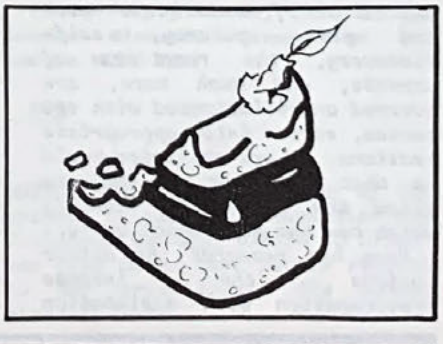
FRED:- No, only support. And the organisation that facilitates this sort of thing made an official statement that attention to bisexuality should be integrated anyhow within the paper. So, I'm a very lucky situation with a lot of support.

MARTIN:- That's quite a good start. How about the national bisexual network, what are your opinions on that?

FRED:- I think its good that they are in existence, it's good that they have their own periodical [Bi-Nieuws]. But my criticism is that they want to build up something starting with a national organisation, and then work to form local groups. I think that that should be reversed, start with forming strong local groups and having representatives in the National Network. That's an organisational criticism, and furthermore, this is a personal opinion, not the opinion of my group, that they should align themselves more closely politically with the lesbian and gay liberation movement. That's what I am doing here.

MARTIN:- How would you like to see bisexuality regarded by the lesbian and gay movement, for bisexuality to be totally integrated or to have a seperate movement and identity that works in parallel.

FRED:- The second one. A strong seperate movement, that has close bonds with the lesbian and gay movement.



BOOKS

'Pulling It Off'

In times of increasingly negative attitudes to sex and sexuality, it makes a refreshing change to read a book that eroticises 'safer' sex and celebrates diversity. 'Pulling It Off' surveys the 'masturbation practices of 191 mid-western American boys', taking and putting into print the boys' own words on a subject that is clearly important to them:- masturbation alone and with others.

The publishers, Acolyte Press, explain that they received a letter from Dr. Joseph Winchester, saying that he had been working for twenty years (1960-1980) on a professional study of masturbation in boys (under 16). He later sent the study, but with no return address. Thus the authenticity of the study cannot be verified; however the richness of detail and variety of responses lead me to believe that the interviews are authentic. Spoken honestly and without adult-like inhibitions they illustrate the wealth and variety that lie within sexuality.

Dr. Joseph Winchester criticises past research on the subject of masturbation for one common failing:- these are all retro-spective studies. He takes descriptions made, at the time, of how boys circumsised and un-circumsised, manually and otherwise, stimulate their penises, alone, with a partner, or in groups. He looks at what lubricants, vibrators and other sex aids the boys may use, and at what part masturbation plays in their social lives. The experience of masturbation pre- and post- puberty, . self-discovery, the reactions of parents, and much more, are covered and illustrated with 400 quotes, sorted into appropriate sections. My one criticism would be that there is no code to allow the reader to identify which boy has made which quote.

From his research the author notices the intense preoccupation with mastubation for boys. He notes that physical experimentation and sheer physical pleasure reach a peak at around puberty. As the boys then develop into full adolescence and eventually into manhood the techniques used become less varied and more automatic and fantasy becomes more and more the dominant element of each masturbatory event. This explains why for many masturbation comes to be seen as a poor substitute for intercourse, 'the dreams of which are really all that matters'.

The author points to the change in attitutes to masturbation as a boy gets older, as being an important reason for the failings of retrospective studies. Adult values set out to demean and diminish the important experiences of childhood. Boys of 16 and 17 will say things like 'we fooled around sometimes, but that was just kids stuff'.

Dr. Joseph Winchester talks about the trust that he as a gay pedophile could generate with the boys, unlike most other so-called experts in the field.

'The boy must be made to feel that his masturbation experiences and techniques are interesting, that he is not being judged according to some mystic adult standard,- that the man is trustworthy and especially that the man likes him'.

The author was unable to take a scientifically representative sample of the boys, taking histories as the opportunities presented themselves. No doubt the boys he met were more outgoing and self-confident, more sexual and sexually aware than average.

Almost all the boys in the study thought 'jerking off with your buddy', if perhaps a bit naughty, certainly normal, though they usually constructed a rationale around why none of this was homosexual. Winchester's findings reflect what is reported by many gay pedophiles, that boys enjoying gay sexual activity will continue to define themselves as heterosexual, and will go on to develop heterosexual relationships. For those interested in 'promoting' homosexuality, this finding is just one relevant one in the whole important area of childhood sexuality.

There is much of interest and much to learn in 'Pulling It Off'. The sexuality of many boys reaches a peak at a time at when positive information about sexuality is denied them, so this book would be a useful resource for them. For men, as well, it encourages experimentation with new techniques, switching the emphasis back from fantasy to sheer physical pleasure. What will make the book controversial (and maybe difficult to obtain) is, firstly, that many may find it sexually arousing, and secondly, it succeeds in reducing the socially created barrier between adults and children. It gives adults not only a better insight of the sexuality of boys, but it may also awaken in men feelings and memories of their own boyhoods.

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LETTERS

Making Contact

One option for those seeking a relationship is to use Contact Magazines............ or is it?

Anastasia's findings in her booklet 'UK Personal Contact Magazines - An independent Opinion' cast doubt on the effectiveness of either placing an ad, or responding to one.

Anastasia provides advice, information and statistical analysis of the number and types of responses, and of a low, low success rate.

Unfortunately 'mainstream' gay personal ads are not really covered. There is very little data on responses to 'Him' and 'Gay Times', and London's 'Capital Gay' (with probably the greatest weekly turn-over of ads) is not covered at all.

If you are contemplating using the contact mags, such as 'Rendezvous', 'Questa', 'Forum', then at £1 this booklet is good value. If you already use them, then Anastasia will only depress you more by telling you what you already know.

Anastasia does however offer a way out of the dead-end, with her club for bisexuals (and tv's), which may just be the whole point of the booklet.

'Love Stories'

Three Love Stories, Alternative Press, 1988. U.K. £5. Anastasia.

Some poetry and prose can only be appreciated by the author. Such is the case for 'Three Love Stories', by Anastasia, though the price of £5 for 24 pages indicates a motive of profit, as well as 'art'.

I guess Anastasia is aiming to develop a mystical and erotic style, in which love and sex are intertwined in a sort of romantic dream-like haze.

However the self-indulgent writing together with the scrappy production and amusingly tacky pictures, make it hard to take seriously. It was neither erotic, nor interesting.

Available: *Anastasia, c/o 12 Thornton Road, Leytonstone, London E11 4DH. - see Anastasia's letter in this issue.*

BI-MONTHLY *has never had so many letters before, so in this issue most are edited for size and clarity. Normally we print all the letters we get. However this time not printed is a letter from Sue O'Sullivan concerning Bi-Monthly's comments on her critical review of 'Bisexual Lives', in the Pink Paper. I apologise for my hurtful words. It was my interpretation of what one of our contributors alleges was said to him by Sue, herself, at a party.*

THANKS *for letters from Dave Berry and from Sean McGouran of Gay Star, pointing out that in Scotland and Northern Ireland, respectively, the main lesbian and gay campaigning organisations have accepted and supported 'bisexuality' for many years.*

Martin Burgess (Editor)

Dear Sir,

Your recent article on Sado Masochism prompts me to write on this fearfully taboo subject.

Far more research is needed to get beyond the Marquis de Sade/black leather jacket image that this unfortunately has acquired.

From my experiences at a public school where in the 1970's 'swishing' had just been reduced, I observed boys becoming 'perverted' by either witnessing or being on the receiving end of canes plimsolls etc.

This mingled with homosexuality and additional and earlier punishment in the home produced some weird cases.

It is a fact that most children become sado masochists by having connection in some way with CP (corporal punishment).

I think that it is a myth that sado masochists enjoy activity but are rather more voyeurs than participents. Thus the massive increase in videos, magazines and so forth catering to this subject since 1975 when there was hardly any.

Yours Faithfully,

B. Sneddon Esq.

EDITOR - Thanks for your comments. For your information there is a book 'The English Vice' by Ian Gibson that looks in some depth, and very critically, at the history of Corporal Punishment in England. I hope to review this book in a future issue, as its contents are becoming even more relevant today, with our return to 'Victorian Values', the probable cause, of an increasing interest in CP pornography.

Daring to Speak

Dear Editor,

Thankyou for printing the article 'Daring to Speak' in the last issue. I'm sure this letter has struck a chord with many readers including myself.

I know that in Britain today, children have very little power over their own lives, and present developments seek to continue this shameful situation. The right to some sort of effective 'education' is something that all children should have, and yet such despotic rulings as Section 28 seek to halt the most basic of an emotional education.

As a child I had dreams which involved me 'asserting' a minimal amount of power on others, for mutual benefit. At school I longed to hug my male peers closely, but couldn't for fear of persecution. Therefore I acted out my needs in the form of dreams. In my dreams no-one disaproved of my actions - I could do what I wanted - on my own terms.

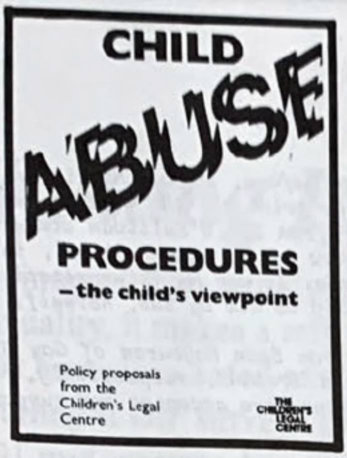
Are there any others who have had similar experiences? And are there any support groups for people who have had, or are experiencing difficulties, as outlined in the said article?

Please reply to me, care of the London Bisexual Group, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX.

Dug

EDITOR'S NOTE - The writer of the article in issue 20 'Masochism and Childhood fantasy, DARING TO SPEAK' has also asked that people respond to her article c/o the London Bisexual Group.

LETTERS



CHILD ABUSE PROCEDURES

– the child's viewpoint

Policy proposals from the Children's Legal Centre

THE CHILDREN'S LEGAL CENTRE

ABUSE!

Dear Editor,

Thankyou for publishing my review of the Children's Legal Centre booklet 'CHILD ABUSE PROCEDURES - THE CHILD'S VIEWPOINT', Bi-Monthly certainly doesn't shy away from controversy, and these are the issues on which few indeed dare to challenge the orthodoxy of the day, so I appreciate your courage in providing some space for another view.

I would however ask for the opportunity to point out to your readers that one sentence in the review, beginning 'Higgs added mental torture to the physical one...' (sic) was an editorial addition with which, for several reasons, I disagree. Also the way in which it has been added might suggest that it reflects the contents of the book itself, which it does not.

Having mentioned two of the booklets main topics, confidentiality and consent - I intended to pass on to the third - interviewing techniques - and in particular, how during the widely used 'disclosure interview' children are browbeaten, blackmailed and tricked into 'disclosing' abuse, and not believed until they do so.

"There is a belief that such is the pressure on the child not to talk that a comparable amount of pressure the other way is justified... Even if that were true, it makes no allowance for the child who has not in fact been abused and whose denial is a true one." (The Official Solicitor's evidence to the Cleveland enquiry, as quoted in the booklet).

Yours,
Leo Adamson

BORN TO BE BI!

Dear Editor, I really don't see on what grounds Howard Pinter (October edition) bases his incredibly sweeping statement: 'Basically we are all either heterosexual or homosexual and usually by the age of 26 we have sorted ourselves out'. He gives three examples, none of which proves his point. To counter his claim I can give two very good examples.

My mother was happily married for 28 years before having a very happy five year long lesbian relationship in her fifties. She is now alone, and looking for either a man or a woman to share her life/bed with.

My own life has included relationships and encounters with males and females. I have lived with my present girlfriend for seven years, discussing my bisexuality openly with her.

Bisexuality for me is not so much to do with who you sleep with. It is a philosophy and a life-style that is so different to the 'straight' and the 'gay' philosphies and life-style that it stands as a genuine alternative to both of these. I am very happy to say at the of 28 I haven't 'sorted myself out', and am quite convinced that I was born to be bi.

Yours Sincerely,
Max Desorgher

EXCLUDED!

Dear London Bisexual Group,

I am extremely glad I was unable to attend this years's conference as I was most angry and upset when I saw the agenda and found I would have been excluded from the one workshop that dealt with my own sexuality.

At the conference in Edinburgh in 1987 I made the suggestion that a group should be convened in which we reply to questions and discuss feelings openly with those who have difficulties about us. This was ignored.

I can appreciate that other women need to come to terms with our existence, but talking about us while we are excluded is not the way to do it. Imagine how lesbians would feel if they were excluded from a workshop on lesbianism in which straight women talked about how they felt about lesbians.

The fact is that many TS women are not distinguishable as having a previous non-female biology and so if we wanted we could infiltrate the workshps titled **WOMEN ONLY - NO TRANSEXUALS.** Of course if we were subsequently found out we would be reviled as male invaders, when all we would be trying to do , would be, as we see it, only to take up our natural rights.

People are only too keen to make judgemental statements about us without knowing anything about us, beyond which they have read in the gutter press, or have been told to believe by hate-filled separatists like Janice Raymond.

Firstly we are not a homogeneous body, but individuals of great diversity. Secondly transexuality is a state or condition which if denied can lead to great unhappiness, depression and even suicide. Some TS's may degrade women, but you do not exclude all women from conferences on sexuality because some women are thought to degrade women.

I am sick and tired of people who regard transexuals as a kinky freak show, or else as some heinous political crime against women. I am proud of what I have achieved in breaking out of my detested male upbringing, and realising the woman that I am.

I believe people have no idea of the difficulties transexuals experience, or of how much effort we invest before we can fulfill our sexualities.

I thought that the bisexual movement was about tolerance and integrating various sexualities into a broad movement that accepts diversity. The signals I got from the conference booklet indicated that transexuals have no place in the bisexual movement. I am not prepared to wait quietly hoping that the consensus will decide they don't mind my existence.

Basically the question for conference organisers is:- "Is the bisexual movement going to continue to treat transexual women in the same way that homophobic heterosexuals treat lesbians, gays and bisexuals". I hope that next year there will be a welcoming space for transexual women, but if there isn't, be prepared to put up with one hell of a fuss, from myself at least.

Yours,
Claire Randall

Gender Bender!

What did you do before you were an editor?
I was a butcher

Anastasia runs a 'club for bisexuals', as covered in the last issue of Bi-Monthly. He/she also runs the 'Alternative Press'. (p. 21 for reviews). For details of the club write sending SAE to:- Anastasia, c/o 12 Thornton Road, Leytonstone, London E11 4DH

Dear Editor,

Thankyou for sending me Bi-Monthly No. 20 and asking me to contribute. My response is based only on reading this one issue, but I seem to disagree about most things, and I will be happy to explain why.

I would venture that 99% of the people who write to me are just not interested in OLGA, CHE, workshops and all the rest of it. One mention of campaign groups, workshops, rights, or any other sort of politicking, and they don't want to know. They have enough internal problems.

This has always been obvious enough; what may be new, is the analysis I have tried to make of why. As a counsellor I find it nearly always comes down to a search for identity. Not necessarily bisexual identity, any sexual identity (though an alarming number of young males, brought up straight and finding themselves reacting against it, think that there is no choice except all one way or all the other, they have never heard of bisexuality at all). I can stop most of them in their tracks by asking simply what is sex, and they can't even answer that. We are a nation of sexual illiterates.

The most fundamental problem of all is fear. It is my considered guess that seven-eighths of all people who use sex contact mags (other than professionals) never actually do anything, and mostly because of fear.

So what do we do? What I want to start with is the premise that gender is relative, not absolute. We accept it nevertheless, if we can, as a matter of biological necessity followed by social convention. In that sense I agree with your abusive correspondent that the bisexual condition is specious, and the first thing that I tell people is that all forms of alternative love, that is anything other than monogamous heterosexuality - are a compromise. I, however, do not want to declare compromise a waste of time. Quite the reverse. Any love is better than no love, as long as we admit it to ourselves.

If we trace ourselves back to the green slime, or whatever we find that gender evolved only gradually, and that the evolution of gender was imperfect in body - for example the retention by males of superfluous nipples - and not surprisingly for some of us in mind also. If we think of ouselves as all having from conception a ptential to be either gender (via our XX and XY chromosomes and so on) there is no reason why the normal process of polarisation should not be frustratable, by circumstances or by choice. Then gender change becomes a factor. One form of this is transvestism, the taking of opposite gender from without, in the form of clothing. Another is transexuality, where bodily change is undertaken. Both of these tend to involve static attitudes, usually egocentric, the same as all gender or sexual identities which people take for their own benefit.

This is why I have struck out for a third sub-division, those who are transgendered in totality. That is those for whom gender identity is fluid, for whom our strength is our very ability to change to suit others. This takes us beyond the whole concept of identity, as others are still struggling with it, we have inverted it by rejection. Nobody seems to recognise us at all, yet we are the logical conclusion of bisexuality and gender transience combined, and I have been lately trying to find out how many of us there are. Quite a few it would seem once the concept is offered to them as an established alternative to all the others. This is the function at which I have arrived with my club. We regard gender not as an identity but as an obstruction which we have triumphed over, and which we will henceforth do what we like with, for each other.

I personally am transgendered, which is an achieved stable condition in which I am happy to love any gender and to be any gender (or indeed any personality) in return. This includes being both genders at once, as near as can be compromised. I mainly use the feminine idiom because people respond more to that, whilst retaining masculinity of body beneath becuse change would not add anything.

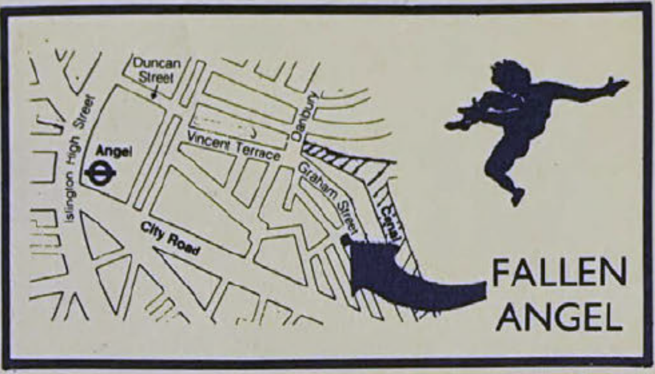
Could this be the ultimate way forward for all bisexuals? I don't know, and I look in vain for anything in your magazine to suggest the possibilities. Faced with the immediate neuroses people throw at me through hate I find that love is infinitely more important than all the current agonised identity politicking put together. Maybe men will ultimately evolve back into androgony anyway, as some believe, having nowhere else to go. In the meantime I offer my own example merely as a further alternative which some of you might pause to consider.

Love,
Anastasia

INFORMATION

LONDON BISEXUAL GROUP

The **London Bisexual Group** meets every Monday evening at 8.30 pm, upstairs at the Fallen Angèl (65 Graham St, N1), a friendly pub in Islington. The LBG is open to people of all sexual identities, and aims to provide a relaxed, but stimulating atmosphere. Why don't you come and make some new friends!



For further information write to:- **LBG, BM BI, LONDON WC1N 3XX**. Or phone David: 01 340 5729.

FEBRUARY	
Monday 28th	Bisexual Promotions Inc. present the first performance of **LIVE BISEXUALS ON STAGE** - followed by discussion. No entry after 8.45 pm.
MARCH	
Monday 6th	*** 21st Issue Party for BI-MONTHLY *** Home-made cakes and their makers welcome!
Sunday 12th	**Monthly planning meeting**, at Ian's 7.30pm. A friendly welcome for all those who want to help run the group! Contact David (see above) for details.
Monday 13th	**Sexuality and Spirituality** - Alison and Claire
Monday 20th	**Children and Sexuality** - Claire and Andy
Monday 27th	Bank Holiday Social

CALLING ALL WOMEN

On the second Monday of each month, we extend a particularly warm welcome to bisexual women at the London Bisexual Group. Women organise these meetings, lead discussions and run workshops on themes of particular relevance to women. Any woman interested in being involved in planning, or who can offer workshops, ideas for discussions etc, contact Al via LBG.

BISEXUAL GROUPS

BRITAIN

Ayrshire:
Contact through Bisexual Phoneline - see 'Advice'.

Bristol:
Contact:- Guy, 0272-556 132,(messages)

East Anglia:
University of Anglia Bisexual Group, University House, UEA, Norwich, Norfolk - welcomes non-students

Edinburgh:
Edinburgh Bisexual Group meets Thursdays, 8 pm, at Lesbian and Gay Community Centre, 58a Broughton St. For details contact Bisexual Phoneline.

Glasgow:
For details contact Bisexual Phoneline - see 'Advice'.

Humberside:
Hull University Bisexual Group, Union Building, Hull University, Cottingham Road, Hull. Contact - Mark, (0482) 491 775.

Leeds:
Contact:- Kitty, (0532)-623 330.

London:
LONDON BISEXUAL GROUP - see Advertisment on left for details.

London Bisexual Women's Group, BM LBWG, London WC1N 3XX.

The Older Lesbian and Bisexual Women's group is a non-scene group that meets for meals, etc. in London SW1. Telephone: 01-979 0695 (6-8 pm).

Manchester:
Manchester Women's Bisexual Group - meet 2nd Thursday of the month, at Manchester Gay Centre, 61a Bloom St, Manchester. For further info: Vi, c/o WBG, P.O.Box 153, Manchester M60 1LP, or ring 061-274 3999 (4-10pm).

Manchester Bisexual Group meet at Resource Centre, 61 Bloom St. 1st Thursday monthly 8.30 - 10.00 Contact Paul Owen on 061-236 5986 (4-10pm) or 061-228 3554 (2-4pm).

Tyneside:
Contact:- Simon Henderson, 31 Harrison Place, Sandyford, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE2 1DE.

Bisexuals in NALGO, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX

Bisexuals and married gay group. Details: Nigel 01-558 5203 (5.30-10pm)

Radical Black Bisexual Caucus, c/o BM 4390, London WC1N 3XX

SIGMA:- support for relationships where one partner is gay or bisexual. Details London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard - 01-837-7324.

Bisexual Artists/Performers/Writers/Musicians Network, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX.

Bisexual Pagans, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX

BISEXUAL PHONELINE: 031-557 3620 Thursday 7.30-9.30 pm.

ABROAD

UNITED STATES:-
(For a full list write to Bi-Monthly, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX)

North American Bi Network, c/o Bi-Pol, 584 Castro St, #422, San Fransisco, CA 94114 (+ newsletter)

East Coast Bisexual Network, PO Box 639, Cambridge MA 02140.

North Bi Northwest, PO Box 30645, Seattle, WA 98103 (+ newsletter)

Bay Area Bisexual Network, 48 Shattuck Square, #142, Berkley, CA 94704 (+ newsletter)

Boston Bisexual Womens' Network, PO Box 639, Cambridge MA 02140. (newsletter: BI WOMEN)

Boston Bisexual Mens' Network, PO Box 1645, Cambridge MA 02238. (newsletter: The BI- MONTHLY)

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, PO Box 30645, Seattle, WA 98103

Bisexuality: News, views and networking, c/o Gibbin. Publications, PO Box 20917, Long Beach, CA 90801-3917, (213) 597 2799

CANADA:
British Columbia Bi Group. Box 3287, Vancouver, BC V6B 3X9

NETHERLANDS:
Landelijk Netwerk Biseksualiteit Postbus 5087, 1007 AB, Amsterdam (Vroomshoop 05498-44384)
Magazine:- BI-NIEUWS

WEST GERMANY:
Initiative Bisexualler Frauen & Manner, c/o E. Kocher, Am Niddatal 31, D-6000, FRANKFURT-A-M 90.
069- 76 19 43

Die Lade, 'Bi-Initiative', Karl-Marx-Strasse 58, D1000 BERLIN 44. 030-624 37 61. Thurs 11.00 - 13.00

ADVICE LINES & CAMPAIGN GROUPS:

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard (24hrs) 01-837-7324.

London Lesbian Line 01-251 6911.

London Friend helpline 01-837 3337 (7.30-10 pm) for women 01-281 4970 (Th 7.30-10pm).

Gay Legal Advice 01-253 2043 (Mon - Fri 7-10pm).

AIDS Helpline: Terrence Higgins Trust 01-242 1010 (3-10pm).

GALOP: Gay London Police Monitoring Group 01-278 6215

Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) PO Box 342, London WC1X 0DU, 01-833 3912. Contact for bisexuals:- Martin Burgess.

Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Action (OLGA) 01-833 3860
